

THE NETHERLANDS PRESS AND THE "COLD WAR"

Grave Accusations at the Congress of Doorn

THERE WAS

In the "Maarten-Haartens" at Doorn, Holland, held on 27 September under the sponsorship of the Foreign Information Association (Association of foreign press representatives), a congress which considered primarily the question of the Communist menace which threatens European civilization, Several foreign speakers participated.

Professor Peeters of the University of Ghent said that in 1835 it was predicted already that one day Russia and America were each to dominate half of the world. That prediction is now realized. Now, the question presents itself: what will take place tomorrow? For the Soviet Union is not content with half, it wants the entire world and, by preference, without war. The United States also wishes to attain its end without an armed struggle. From that situation we now have a "cold war." The speaker then went on to show that the press is able to play a very great role in this struggle. But, in Western Europe, it is not united because of ideological problems. In spite of that, its prestige is greater than that of the Russian press. The speaker is of the opinion that it is not proper that the press be in the hands of private enterprise. Subsequently he declared that the press writes too much for the "converted" but not enough for those who need still to be converted. While men suffer in prisons and in concentration camps behind the Iron Curtain, the international press agencies treat these problems very superficially. The German poet Rudolf Hagelstange once said that "totalitarianism compels utterance." It (totalitarianism) sees in art a means of drawing the masses toward it. For that purpose it offers advantages to artists. But, art ought to develop itself in liberty.

Mr. de Courcy who spoke in the name of his brother of "Intelligence Digest" fame, showed that we live in an epoch full of dangers and one never known before. Speaking of the military aspect he said that it is possible to pass resolutions but, in order to obtain results, it is necessary to act. Russia wishes, in reality, Asia. If she keeps Europe in a state of alarm, it is only in order to conquer Asia; in this regard she is counting on the neutrality of India and Pakistan. Stalin possesses a fleet of 350 submarines while Hitler started with 30 or 40. The USSR knows that the nation which has mastery of the seas will win the war. Therefore it would like to destroy the ports and maritime installations of Europe. In the face of this grave menace Europe cannot afford to remain inactive and defenseless. And on this question Western military experts are perhaps a little too optimistic. Americans think of being able to suddenly deliver mortal blows to the heart of Russia. The speaker said further that Europe is far from

wishing

"wishing to be liberated a second time." A fast decision is necessary because otherwise the Europeans will be tempted to look for an area of agreement with the Russians. He is equally of the opinion that the USSR is on the road to becoming an anti-Semitic power. "In Europe we ought to act quickly against the traitors, for the danger of war does not diminish; on the contrary."

M. J. Kalff, mayor of Heilo, said that controls lead to dictatorship and bureaucracy, which, themselves, always dread everything that smacks of individuality. People ought to learn once again to accept and carry (their own) responsibilities.

Mr. Feuilleateau of Bruyn thinks that the Russians now find themselves at the cross-roads. In the interior (of Holland - N.D.T.) it is the Labor Party (P.v.d.A.) which is preparing the bed in which the Communists will wallow. "Our true enemy is the P.v.d.A. and it is against it that the press ought to take action."

The president of the congress, Mr. Fabius, deplored the fact that too few young people are taking an interest in these problems.

A journalist who was present then gave some precise details on the working methods of the press. Mr. de Spanjaard (Amsterdam) subsequently replied by attacks against some journalists whom he named, while the radio reporting staff of the Netherlands press agency (A.N.P.) was referred to by him as "parrots." A representative of the A.N.P. who was present as a guest protested to Mr. Fabius. The latter replied that this protest could not be considered officially because of the fact that it came from a guest and not from a delegate to the congress.

In the course of the discussions some attacks were launched against Mr. Paul-Henri Spaak but they were not pursued because they were not on the agenda.

(Excerpts from an article in the newspaper "Utrechtsche Nieuwblad" of Utrecht):- "On the subject of the assertions of Mr. Fabius and others concerning the Netherlands press, we see no reason for these reprimands. Our readers are certainly in agreement with our position in the East-West controversy. On this subject neither we nor other newspapers have left our readers in uncertainty. What can be said of the idea that the press ought not to be in the hands of private enterprise and of the suggestion to arrest immediately the "traitors"? To our taste this seems too much like totalitarianism. The West ought to be defended if it is true, but not by such means."

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